

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested.

Claims 3-12 are pending. Claims 3-10 are amended, claims 1 and 2 are canceled, and claims 11 and 12 are added.

Claim 3 is rewritten in independent form with corrections to overcome the objection to the drawings and disclosure. Specifically, with respect to the drawing objection, claim 3 now recites that the generator carrier (12) is adapted to be fastened to a vehicle steering wheel. This feature is shown in the drawings. Thus, the objection to the drawings should be withdrawn. The numbers 10, 12, 100 are also inserted in claim 3 and the other claims as suggested by the examiner to correct the informalities. Also, the abstract and disclosure is amended as suggested by the examiner to correct the informalities. Thus, the objection to the specification should be withdrawn.

Claim 3 stands rejected as being anticipated by Schutz. This rejection is respectfully traversed. Schutz does not disclose or suggest detent elements consisting at least partially of a multiple component plastic. By contrast, Schutz shows a cup-shaped module housing 22 with a base 23, which forms at the same time a support for a gas generator 24 (column 2, lines 30-33). Detent elements in the form of pins 33 are provided, where the pin 33 has a holding surface 42 that is electrically insulated from the rest of the pin, for example by a coating or a disc of insulating material (column 2, lines 50-52). The pin 32 and the base 23 of the module

housing 22 can consist of metal (column 3, lines 4 and 5). Alternatively, it would also be conceivable to construct the pin 32 in plastic and to provide the contact surface 40 with a metallization. The module housing 22 can likewise consist of plastic, so that the pin 33 can also be molded on in one operating step (Column 3, lines 55-61). In another embodiment, a detent hook 132 is provided as a detent element, which consist of a metallic contact body 143 and an insulation 144 (Column 4, lines 9-11).

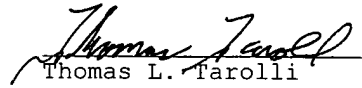
Schutz fails to disclose a detent element consisting at least partially of a multi-component plastic. A metallization consists solely of metal with no plastic. Thus, the metallic portion of the detent cannot form part of a multiple-component plastic. Thus, claim 3 is allowable. Claims 4-8 depend from claim 3 and are therefore allowable as depending from an allowable claim and for the specific features recited therein.

New claim 11 is substantially similar to the original claim 6, which depended on claim 1, rewritten in independent form. New claim 12 is substantially similar to the original claim 8, which depended on claims 1, 5 and 7, rewritten in independent form. Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Schutz in view of Rumpf. Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schutz in view of Rumpf as applied to claim 6 above, and further in view of Worrell et al. Claims 9 and 10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Rumpf in view of Worrell et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

A certified copy of an English translation of the present patent application filed in Germany on October 30, 2002 will be sent to the examiner as soon as possible. Accordingly, the present application is entitled to the priority date of the German application. The priority date of the Rumpf patent is October 30, 2002, which is the same as the priority date for the present application. Also, the filing date of the present application is October 21, 2003, which is earlier than the filing date (October 23, 2003) of the Rumpf patent. Therefore, the Rumpf document does not qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) and 35 U.S.C. 103(a). Thus, any 35 U.S.C 103(a) rejections of the original claims 6, 8, 9, and 10 using the Rumpf document should be withdrawn. Further, amended claim 6, which now depends on claim 3, and amended claim 8, which now depends on claims 3, 5, and 7, cannot also be rejected using the Rumpf reference based on the above-mentioned reason. Therefore, claims 6, 8, and 9-12 are allowable.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the amendment be entered and the application allowed. Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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